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Congo News Letter

APRIL 1947

EVANGELISTIC NUMBER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Do The Work Of An Evangelist ..... T.E.Bubeck
"Yes, Mama You're Ready For Baptism" ..... C.J.Jump
Bush Travel At Banza Manteke ..... M.S.Engwall
By-Products Of Evangelism ..... Leonard Gittings
City Evangelism ..... H.D.Brown
Growing Up ..... Viola L.Smith
"Dust And Doings" ..... B.W.Armstrong

* * *

A Week Of Celebrating At Kimpese .... Batomene Alphonse
Evangelism At Camp Leopold ..... Mubiala W. Timothy

STATION NEWS

Banza Manteke ..... E.R.Abbott
Kikongo ..... Gertrude Anderson
Leopodville ..... B.W.Armstrong

* * *

In Memoriam—Mrs.P.C Metzger ..... Ethel D.Brown

* * *

Hallelujah! .....

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Congo News Letter.

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DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

T. E. Bubeck

If Timothy were living today as a missionary on one of our mission fields and Paul were his spiritual father at home it is not hard to imagine the former writing home to ask Paul what he meant. That is, unless Timothy understood that everything else which modern Timothies are called upon to do is secondary to the supreme task of an evangelist, that of bearing "the good news of God's gracious salvation in Christ to men and women who have either not heard of it or have never been persuaded to do anything about it and by all means available to obtain the commitment of their lives to Christ as Savior and Lord." Of course Paul never intended that Timothy should carry on only a spiritual ministry, but he certainly intended that that should take precedence over every other task.

In Ephesus Paul himself caused healing to come to the sick by sending a handkerchief or an apron which had come in contact with his body, to the patient. But what would Paul's ministry have degenerated into had he permitted that to take first place? In all of Paul's ministry he was active in industrial work, perhaps even in agriculture, certainly in education, but never, it would seem, did he permit the making of tents, the blessing of handkerchiefs or aprons, the healing of sick to take precedence over his primary task.

I like an observation made recently in THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY REVIEW by a young woman. In writing on the missionary motive she says: "If you go

to the mission field anticipating that you will spend your time preaching and teaching the Christian Gospel, you will be sadly disappointed, but if you go with any other aim-don't go; stay at home."

Wars and famines make headlines, but the faithful devoted effort of inadequately trained African Timothies often goes unheeded and unobserved.

A few weeks ago we were at one of our posts and as we met with the Christians, as we spoke to the children at the regional school and asked them from which villages they had come, but especially as we examined the hundreds of candidates for baptism we were impressed by the frequent recurrance of the names of two villages — Kitawamba and Kingonzi. It would, perhaps not have impressed you as it did us, but in our minds we went back eighteen years when Tawamba, chief of the former village, sent us an idol about three feet high with the request for a teacher to teach him and his children the Word of God. Fortunately we were able to send one, a small lad who, humanly speaking should never have been sent out and probably would not be sent out today for he didn't "have much on the ball," but he did know what things come first.

A year later when we visited the village we were impressed by what we saw. The chief himself had professed Christ and had given many evidences of his sincerity. We examined 164 candidates for baptism and the following Sunday baptised 74 who had been well trained in classes of instruction for an entire year. Immediately another chief Ngonzi accepted and professed Christ with a great number in his village. Village after village fell in line in an awakening which is still going on.

The young pastor of the post in that area, a young man just back from Kimpese is the result or the fruit of that awakening, as well as his wife who helps in the school. Together through their home life they are an inspiration and an example to the entire church spread over twenty seven villages.

At Christmas he planned and conducted a pageant at-

tended by well over a thousand. When he told us about it he pointed to Herod's chair which stood five feet above the ground. He, the reader,had a perch up in a tree where he could well be heard. But the most original part of all was the place which the angels occupied high up in a tree, hidden in the foliage. It was not hard to imagine the fright of the thousand or more listeners when suddenly seven angels shouted as only African angels can, "Fear not for I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be to all people for unto you is born this day...a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Again and again I found myself asking the question : What if our teachers had not done the work of an evangelist? What if they had presented anything else as the greatest need of the hour? What if they do it today? Something else will be the product of their work, but it will not be what is quite evidently the work of the Spirit of God in and about Kitawamba. Again and again I found myself asking God for sufficient grace and wisdom always to put first things first in the training of these African Timothies that they may go forth from us better trained- "to do the work of an evangelist."

"YES, MAMA, YOU'RE READY FOR BAPTISM"

CHESTER JUMP

"Upon the confession of your faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Those words, spoken in any one of the half dozen or more languages used on the field, are what many are longing to hear, and many are hearing these days, as we go from village to village, and church post to church post, preaching and teaching, and, finally, examining and baptizing those who have shown themselves ready for baptism. The task of passing upon the spiritual and practical fitness of these followers for entrance into the fellowship of the church group, while often arduous and tiring, is such a thrilling and gratifying experience for the

missionary, that it seems only fitting that you should be allowed to share the joys and laughter, as well as the heartaches which are a part of the job.

As a new missionary, fresh from a pastorate in the States, enters upon the work of examining the candidates for baptism, with the aid and advice of older, more-experienced missionaries, he is at once struck by the great contrast between the casual, oftentimes superficial, questioning of those who present themselves for baptism in many of our churches at home, and the care and concern with which the missionaries have approached the matter of determining fitness for church membership. Of course, there is greater need for the education and preparation of our African friends for the responsibilities of the Christian fellowship, since the gap between that status and their previous existence in a pagan, fetish-worshipping society is so great. And yet one wonders what might be the effect on our American Christianity if church membership should come to mean as much to it as it does to those African brethren who have had to prove themselves worthy of the privilege of being counted a member of the Church of Christ.

In each of the more than 360 villages on the Vanga field there is a catechist, who not only conducts classes for the boys and girls of his village, but also serves as the spiritual leader of the community, preaching and praying with the people daily, and instructing all in the tenets of the Christian faith. Because of his close daily contact with the village people, he occupies a responsible place in the evangelization program, witnessing with his life as well as his word.

Whenever anyone accepts Jesus Christ as his Savior and Leader, he is enrolled as an *nlandi* (follower of Christ), and the responsibility of training him for entrance into the fellowship of Christians becomes that of his village catechist, who in turn is assited by the pastor of that area in his regular visitations, and the missionary in less frequent visits. During this period of a year or more he must not only attend the daily worship services, but is also required to

attend classes for instruction in the fundamentals of the Christian faith. When, in the opinion of the catechist, he has gained a sufficient grasp of the Christian way, and his daily living is approved by the Christians of his village as being acceptable, he is recommended to the pastor. If the *nlandi* gains the pastor's approval, he is then examined by the native traveling evangelist in his visit to the church post for that purpose.

Finally comes the great day when this follower, in company with perhaps two hundred others of his area, is presented to the missionary for final examination. This examination may last from ten minutes to half an hour depending upon the readiness of the candidate's witness. At the beginning a check-up is made of the candidate's ablity to read, since all good Christians ought to be able to read God's Word themselves. Then, he is asked for his church marriage certificate, if married, as it is felt that, in a land where adultery and immorality are prevalent, all Christians should be united in services in which the religious significance and sacredness of marriage may be explained to them. The candidate also must present his "*nlandi* card", showing the regularity of his giving.

These preliminaries completed, he then faces a barrage of questions, intended to reveal whether or not he has grasped the significance and meaning of the fellowship into which he seeks entrance. "Why do you want to be saved?" "Why do you need to be saved?" "How is a person saved?" "Why is Jesus alone able to save us?" "What is repentance?" "What is faith?" "What is sin?" "What are the wages of sin?" "How can others know that you are a Christian?" "Why do Christians give?" "To whom do they give?" Other questions reveal his knowledge of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, also his familiarity with the birth, death, and resurrection of the One whom he owns as Lord and Master. And, then, of course, all must know how to win others to Christ, for those who would not be soul-winners certainly would be lacking in their testimony.

Naturally, the answers to these queries are many and

varied. While the majority are satisfactory, and lead to the candidate being accepted for baptism, some of the others are discouraging, as they disclose how much many of our people still must learn before they can escape the fears and beliefs of paganism. On the other hand, humorous replies sometimes relieve the tension of long hours of examining. For instance, when asked regarding the Ten Commandments, "Whom shalt thou not kill?", one replied, "Thou shalt not kill thy neighbor's goats or chickens". Again, on one occasion, forgiveness was explained as follows: "If my neighbor kills one of my goats, and says that he is sorry, I must forgive him, and he doesn't have to pay me a goat. But if he does it again, then he had better watch out!"

And then there are the testimonies which reveal a depth of experience, and give the missionary a thrill. In illustration, one remembers little, wizened Mama Kisia at Post Kumbi. She couldn't read. The missionaries had not yet arrived at Vanga, and there were no schools when she was a girl. She didn't know her catechism very well. And yet, even if the pastor and deacons had not spoken of her faith, one would have sensed that here was one worthy of the Christian fellowship. We asked her what would happen if she should die before she had the opportunity to be baptized. Would she go to heaven? And her reply was, "Of course! For I've been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and It lives in my heart!" One cannot measure the joy or the satisfaction which the missionary receives when he is able to say to so many what we said to this born-again soul at Kumbi, "Yes, Mama, you're ready for baptism. You're worthy to enter into the fellowship of His people and to bear His name!"

"Lord, make us to resemble even here the heavenly kingdom, through mutual love, where all hatred is quite banished, and all is full of love, and consequently, full of joy and gladness - Amen."

Prayer by Ludodicus Dives, 1578.

BUSH TRAVEL AT BANZA MANTEKE

MARTIN S. ENGWALL

Regular airline traffic having been established between New York and Leopoldville some people are liable to get the impression that air travel is getting to be the accepted mode of travel in this country. Others, hearing about mission stations where there is a car available for each missionary are liable to think that Congo is on the way to catch up with U.S. in the matter of motor travel. Thus it may come as a surprise to many that some of us are still doing the major part of our village visitation on foot and measuring distances between villages as so many hours' walk. But whatever mode of travel used there is a crying need for visiting the villages and keeping up close contact with our constituency.

One is amazed at the amount of superstition that still exists in some of our villages after all these years of evangelization. A story came to light recently of a father who did not feel that he had received a sufficiently large dowry or bride price for his daughter so as a revenge he put a curse on her so that she should not bear any children and even told her she was going to die. So implicit is their belief in the effectiveness of such a curse that the daughter lost all interest in life and did not eat and before long was very emaciated and actually in danger of dying. In his distress her husband went to see the father and asked what he demanded in order to lift the curse from his daughter. When the father had thus obtained what he was after a big public ceremony was arranged for lifting the curse. The father and daughter sat down before the assembled crowd, facing each other, the father looking toward the East and the daughter toward the West. The father then put dust on his knees three times and each time the daughter brushed it off. After this the father chewed a certain kind of grass and spit some of the saliva in the hands of his daughter.

This was symbolical and envisaged the time when she would hold her children in her arms. Then as a climax the father crooked his little finger into that of his daughter and together they jumped several times. While doing this the father called out to God to loosen the curse on his daughter, in heaven just as he was now loosening it on earth and after that the daughter went home happy and before long she was expecting the arrival of her first-born. What impressed me most in the story was the terrible callousness of the father who was quite willing to see his daughter waste away and die if he did not get the sum he had set out to obtain.

We often think of the "Kompani", i. e. the places lying along the railroad as special places of iniquity. This is not always so. One of the most interesting trips I have made was visiting the little pick-axe villages and the small railroad stations and holding services with the people. In one such place we found a veritable "mother in Israel" who had kept her faith tho far removed from her village. How eagerly she talked about the joy in her heart and her concern for the salvation of those around her. As we sat talking a train rushed by and the engineer, recognizing the missionary as an old friend, waved a friendly greeting that filled the missionary's heart with joy. At the service in the evening it began to rain so we had to move into the house of the camp foreman. It got rather crowded but the spirit in the meeting was wonderful and many asked for our prayers and the Station Master and his wife both asked to be restored to church membership.

In one of the villages a woman asked the missionary: "Why, don't you know me? If it hadn't been for you I wouldn't be alive today." Then she proceeded to remind him of an incident that happened on his previous visit in the village. Just as the meeting began there were a woman's agonizing cries heard from the bush on the outskirts of the village and all the women got up to go and attend on their friend in her hour of need. About 10 p.m. the missionary was called to the scene with the fervent hope that he could do something to help the poor woman who had just given

birth to a still-born child and whose ordeal was not yet over What a helpless feeling for one who is not in medical service to be called at a time like that with all eyes riveted on him since he is supposed to be able to help in all situations. In this case it was evident that matters had come to a dead stop and that the woman's life depended on her getting immediate medical attention. After a long time of persistent urging the men finally got a blanket tied to a pole and thus made into a hammock of sorts and about midnight they started off for the nearest mission station where the woman soon recovered. Left to themselves there is no doubt but that the woman would have been left there to die.

As far as statistics go there was an addition to our Banza Manteke church of over 400 during 1946. On the Bangu in spite of relentless Catholic opposition there were 167 baptized at the Associational meeting. Remembering that once only a handful of earnest disciples "turned the whole world upside down" according to the testimony of their enemies one yearns for some such impact to be brot to bear upon their community by our new Christians, and the situation is not wholly hopeless. We have many earnest Christians who testify with their lives to the transforming power of Christ's Gospel.

There is Nzieto, one of our pastors, who refused part of his salary one month because he did not feel he deserved it. There is Masamba who gave up a comparatively well-paying job on the station to go back to his home church to be its pastor at a salary of less than two dollars per month. There is Mampuya who is stirring up the Bangu church into new life after many years of stagnation and, lastly, there is Lubenzo, our newest pastor, young and energetic and determined to do his utmost to lead the church forward into a fuller knowledge of what it means to be Christian.

Today several girls came right from class and asked for the privilege of bringing us some water because they had heard that we must pay to have our water brot up. And the Station Church recently gave 2000 francs to help in buying food for our school pupils and at present they are

engaged in building a house for a teacher on the station. They have hired their own mason and carpenter and doing it all themselves and it was all done at their own initiative. And in the big centers we hear of a collection being taken to buy typewriters for the school so the boys can learn typing. Up till now that would have been expected of the Mission.

Last week we had a wonderful experience. At the end of our Religious Emphasis Week in which we had the help of our veteran missionary Dr. Mabie we had the joy of seeing about 70 young people come forward in answer to the invitation to accept Christ as their personal Savior. How we wished then that some of our friends at home who are giving of their means to support this work could have been present and experienced that joy that gripped our hearts. And so we are happy and rejoice in the work, the God-given task of winning these people for Christ who came that they, too, "might have life and have it more abundantly."

BY-PRODUCTS OF EVANGELISM

LEONARD GITTINGS

I have been thinking recently of the significance of the little things in our work. But at home and on the mission field one is often tempted to think in terms of the bigger and more apparent things. We judge of the progress of our work for the Lord by statistics, crowds, outward display.

Our work at Sona Bata has not been without its crowds and its manifestations of visible results. During the past year, over one thousand people were baptized from among three or four times that number of inquirers. We attended great gatherings at which sometimes several thousand people were present at one time. Native workers can be numbered in the hundreds and the gifts of our native Christians for the support of the work amounted to about 150,000 francs, a considerable sum from the point of view of the economic level of the people.

Yet I do not feel that these somewhat imposing statistics are, after all, the most significant things in our work. They gladden the hearts of course, but there are many small indications of the working of God's Spirit in the hearts and lives of many people that also gladden us. I might call them the *by-products* of evangelism, and I would like to show what I mean by a few illustrations gleaned from experiences met with during the last month or so as I have traveled some 1000 kilometers by car and foot in our farflung district.

I walk into a village, unexpected, and under the verandah of a simple hut I come across two elderly pastors who have given long years of service under trying and sometimes even dangerous conditions. They have been absorbed in Bible study together, and their Kikongo Bibles, marked in pencil, lie open on a table before them. One look at their faces tells me that they have been in touch with eternal realities. I visit with them, we pray together, then I pass on to another village. As I enter it, an elderly woman with a gentle smile on her face suddenly slips out from behind a hut, kneels down in the simple and courteous manner of a Bakongo greeting. In her hands are two eggs — worth a day's wages now. "You want to sell them?" I ask. She shakes her head. "A gift" she says quietly, "Go well on your way, father". And before I can say an adequate "Thank you" she is gone again, behind the hut. "Who is she?" I inquire of a man standing by. "A very faithful Christian", is the reply. "*She likes to give*".

A little later I spend the night at a chief's village. After the evening service in a full church I meet the chief and chat with him. He takes part in the service and in a meeting of the church elders I hold afterwards. I find he is a steady and devoted deacon in the local church, and the pastor tells me that he is very helpful. At another village I discover that the white-haired chief there too, is a Christian of long standing and an acceptable preacher besides.

Then there are sermons that are significant. I listen to

a fine old pastor who has proved his worth through the years, preach on the text "Be ye holy", and my own heart and the hearts of others are warmed. I want to live better because of the sermon. Again, I hear an earnest assistant pastor discourse on the theme "Rejoice in the Lord". I know that he has not much of this world's goods, and I know that he is about to leave his village and friends to go to a new field where he will certainly not have an easy time. His face lights up as he repeats his theme "Rejoice in the Lord".

At another village I surprise the pastor and church by appearing on the scene suddenly. I find the church center clean, orderly, well planned, I conduct the Communion service in the fine little brick church they built themselves, and I am impressed with the depth of thought and the suitability of those who offer prayer, several of whom are women. Not many people at home pray so well (I speak from ten years of pastoral experience in the homeland). I experience something of a thrill as I watch them receive the offering. Out of their little they gave hundreds of francs that morning and they evidently enjoy doing it. They do this regularly out in that village off the beaten track, and they support their own pastors, assistant pastors, and other workers in their churches and schools. They build their own buildings, and they send me extra amounts to be used for new work in other parts of our field. They file in and out of the church, many of them carrying their Bibles and hymn books in their hands, and I discover that they can and do use these regularly.

I enter another village and am greeted by lines of marching boys and girls, clean in body and clothing, singing in excellent harmony as they swing down through the village. They are from one of our schools. In another village I stand in the beautiful moonlight and watch over 100 fine youngsters go through their calisthenics and then march through the village singing hymns. They play a few games under the supervision of a hard-working teacher, and I can see that their days and evenings are regularly occupied with useful

and happy pursuits. Only those who know what the idle youth of Congo villages hear, see and do can appreciate the value of this Christian school.

And so we might go on, that is enough for now, however. Yes, the by-products of evangelism are encouragingly significant in the Congo.

CITY EVANGELISM

H. D. Brown

LEOPOLDVILLE — city of opportunity! Over 100,000 natives have come crowding into the city from the interior bush villages assured that this is the foot of the rainbow where the pot of gold is to be found. There is a knock at the door. An African is here, asking for work. He is one of the 100,000. His last savings are gone having been used to buy his ticket from home to the big city, he has no money for return even if he wished to go back, he cannot get work, and is wandering from one place to the next hoping to get something that will provide him with the means of existence. Most of the 100,000 do have work, for the government tries to control the flux of population and prevent the sort of thing that has happened to the man at our door. But those who do have work, and who are earning the wages that seemed so munificent viewed from the home village, find that higher prices, house rent, taxes, and unexpected needs consume all they earn. Yet they do not wish to return to the country, because here there is excitement, bright lights, the movement of ships and trains and planes, beer halls, dances, and a welcome change from the monotony and restraint of tribal life lived in the bush village. The native city is crowded, and accomodation is hard to find. Here there are trade unions awakening a consciousness of capital and labor, of employes' rights and privileges. Here the open-handed generosity and hospitality of the village are not to be found, for life is hard, tribal bonds do not exist, food is hard to get and there is little of it to share. There are

incentives here to higher standards of living. The African sees fine buildings, paved highways, consumer goods that contribute to greater comfort and luxury, and he reaches out for some of these benefits. Here too, it is easy to slip into a lower level of life, for the tribal sanctions are missing, the disapproving scrutiny of friends and loved ones is absent, and so it is possible to find an organized gang of thieves who break into houses during the furlough of the occupants, carrying off everything — furniture, household utensils, and other equipment. Such gangs are eventually rounded up, there are prison terms to serve, and possible repatriation to the home village. But the trouble is not remedied unless there is a change of heart and purpose.

This is the background and opportunity for city evangelism. These are the people who must be reached with the regenerating gospel of Jesus Christ, who must be brought into saving relationship with the Lord. There is the twofold task of winning the lost and of shepherding the flock. Evangelism is not easy in the city. The city man has lost his sense of need and also the power to believe that he had when he dwelt in the forests. His life is comparatively secure in the city, it slips into a deadly routine, he is not faced with crises and choices as he is when he is living at home, and the gift of eternal life is ignored. Then too, the flock must be cared for. The city is full of men and women who were once church members in good standing in their home villages but who, on coming to the city, did not trouble to ask for letters of transfer nor try to establish fellowship with the city church. These too must be reached.

Reaching the people of the city is done in three ways: through the regular church services; by visitation; through the school. The devoted and loyal service of African workers is essential to this threefold task. Our Leopoldville pastor, Jean Lubikulu, is giving time in all three phases of this effort. Two Bible women are giving time in home visitation. Christian school teachers, working with boys and girls, are able, through daily contacts, to help the young people to

seek Christ and consecrate their lives to His service.

One branch of our city work is among Congo soldiers and their wives at the military camp. Here men are gathered from every area of the Congo — from the Kivu from Elizabethville where are found the great copper mines, from the west where the Atlantic Ocean touches our shores. There are many tongues represented, but the Christian group meets in fellowship through the medium of Lingala, the lingua franca of the central section of Congo. Soldier boys away from home are lonely and need friendship, and our Christian boys are eager to gather for worship, where they are united in one faith. Others are led into the fellowship, and almost every week there are some who signify their desire to receive Christ as Saviour. Many who are Christians ask us to write home for them to request letters of transfer so that they may be received into full membership of the local church. Services are frequently brightened and given inspiration by the singing of various groups, especially the Baluba who are great singers, rendering their songs in their own language.

LEOPOLDVILLE—city of opportunity! Opportunity to reach men of many tribes and tongues for Jesus Christ, to bring them into the fellowship of the faith. "Lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands."

GROWING UP

VIOLA L. SMITH

A week ago today at this time I was sitting in the mud and thatch home of the Kinkosi pastor, waiting for the rain to stop so that we could have the first meeting of the first Board of Trustees to be selected in all of the Kikongo area. It was a step toward which we had been leading the people during the eighteen years since we first came to this field. Small wonder that the pastor and I should spend the time of

waiting in prayer.

It is a wonderful and awesome thing to see a group of people blossom into spiritual adulthood. There have been difficult times during the period of growth when the "child" preferred to remain a child and balked at being asked to grow up. But now, even deacon Matobo, our chronic dissenter, was willing to assume the responsibility of trusteeship and to fill the role of church invigorator.

Trusteeship in Congo is a heavier responsibility than that borne by church trustees in America. The Kinkosi church is not cofined to one town or village. The church center alone comprises a large church building, the parsonage, classroom and dormitories for the regional school supported by the church, and a large thatch hangar to house the communicants who come from a distance and must spend the night at the church center before communion. All of these mud and thatch buildings were built by the Christians of that church. The Kinkosi church receives no financial support from America, except for the training of its workers at the school on the Mission Station.

Perhaps in America the term "Association" would be more easily understood than that of church. We use the word church, because there is only one pastor who may give communion, and the church members come from the villages in his parish once a month to partake of communion and to transact church business. But Kinkosi is the "hub", and from it go the spokes to the thirty one teacher-evangelists in the villages. These newly chosen trustees, the leading Christian laymen and women of the villages, have a big task before them as they will try to keep the spiritual life in a state of constant growth among the groups served by the village chapel-schools. In addition to seeing that the chapel-schools are erected and kept in repair after the ravages of borers and termites, they will need to see that gifts are forthcoming for the support of the pastor and teacher-evangelists. The most important of all their tasks will be the upholding of the pastor and teacher-evangelists in the spiritual guidance of the church and in its program of evangelisation. To become a Christian in

Congo is not easy, for baptism must be preceded by months and at times years of instruction in the essentials of our faith; those young enough to learn, must first learn how to read, so that their faith may be strengthened by daily Bible reading. Christianity means "abundant living" and that includes enlightened minds.

During furlough I have heard certain missionaries boast that they spent all of their time in evangelisation and did not waste their efforts on education. I would be amused if I did not know that the evangelistic outreach of these same missionaries is very often dependent for its effectiveness on the men who have been trained in the Christian schools of those of us who know that literacy is essential if the church of Christ is to grow and endure.

My heart glowed as I returned home from meeting with this group which had grown just a little more than any other of the twelve church groups in our field. These churches are all our spiritual children and we rejoice to see them growing up, even when adulthood makes them less dependent upon us. We do not need to worry that there will be no need of us; our family has many children, and the youngest ones are still not ready for more than the first uncertain steps of wobbly legs. We do not need to worry about getting to the end of our task; these twelve church groups shepherding the Christians in 352 villages have not reached half the area which we are trying to reach. The huge Bayaka field has been scratched only on the surface, and in some parts not a scratch has been made. The Bayansi and Bafunuka people occupy about a third of the field that will remain to Kikongo after the new Bayaka station is founded and we have not even touched the fringes of the field. These are our as yet unborn children in Christ.

I feel sorry for those young people in America who are closing their hearts to God's call to become parents to these unborn spiritual children. Spiritual parenthood brings the privilege of seeing one's children reach adulthood where they are transformed into brothers and sisters in the common task of sharing Christ with the world. Just imagine

a called-of-God young couple being content to remain in America when they might have had a share in our "Harvest Festival" yesterday.

This is the season for harvesting corn and peanuts, and under Gertrude Anderson's enthusiastic guidance, we had a harvest festival in the church. Squash and corn stalks decorated the altar; a very prosaic altar, to be sure, consisting of wash tubs and mats and baskets. But God does not require an elaborate altar for the reception of the gifts of those who love Him. I am sure that he didn't even mind that dignity was thrust aside as the people pushed and shoved one another in their eagerness to bring gifts. I don't think that He minded very much when one of the tiniest little boys filched a few fallen peanuts. There were those other three and four year olds who carefully balanced their plates of dry corn all thru a long service, and triumphantly delivered every grain when at last the opportunity was given. Surely God chuckled along with the rest of us when Gertrude's hen refused to follow the example of Agnes' hen dozing in dignity on the communion table; Gertrude's hen couldn't bear the obscurity of a basket when the choir made its debut; it scrambled to the end of its tether and raised its voice with theirs! Poor hen, to have to retreat in ignominy under the folds of a bath towel, and not take part in the heart-lifting singing that climaxed the service as the very roof vibrated to the joyous call of "Come, come, come!" They came, bringing their gifts, and perhaps, after a while, some new missionaries will come to carry the message to those who haven't yet heard of the Saviour who is Lord of the Harvest.

Lord, take my lips, and speak through them; take my mind and think through it; take my heart, and set it on fire—Amen.
Prayer by M. H. H. Aitken

"DUST AND DOINGS"

B. W. Armstrong

At the West Central African Conference, held at Leopoldville in July, one of the evening devotional leaders committed unto God the "dust and doings of the conference for the day" The achievements of the "doings" far outweighed the "dust" of the hindrances as the conference evaluated the past, and attempted to pattern the immediate future in as far as evangelical mission work in West Central Africa is concerned.

That the holding of this conference was according to God's plan was very evident as each seemingly insurmountable difficulty was faced and overcome before it could cause cancellation. The central committee often met, not knowing what could be done, but the way always opened before them. It was providential that the American Army camp was available for housing the delegates, also providing eating facilities and conference hall. Beds and bedding became available at the last moment. A local restaurant agreed to cater for the conference. All types of transportation were utilized as the delegates came from North America, Europe, and a number of African countries and colonies.

The theme of the conference was "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly", and this ran like a golden thread all through the conference.

The program was arranged to bring into focus the accomplishments and failures of our mission work up to the present. All phases of the Christian life were studied. Different groups discussed the different aspects and wrote up recommendations which were presented to the full conference. From these recommendations the findings of the conference were drawn up. These findings represent the prayerful thought of a large group of Christian men and women from many lands, nationalities, tribes, languages, and backgrounds. They should be carefully studied by all missionaries in the West

Central African area, and they should be translated and made available to the Africans for study. I believe we can more readily overcome our most pressing problems by putting into effect some of the recommendations of the conference, but it will call for the closest cooperation between the missionaries and the Africans. If any criticism of the program is valid, it would be that too much was attempted in too short a time.

In my opinion, the most valuable contribution of the actual sessions of the conference was the keen sense of fellowship. Even the handicap of three languages did not destroy this sense of oneness. And the oneness was not only one of Spirit, but of body as well. For the first time at such a gathering in Central Africa, White and Black met on a basis of equality in conference, around the dining table, and in all accommodations. As Christians we can not support a policy of segregation and the conference has some recommendations to better living conditions and travel accommodations for the African people. This sense of oneness was strengthened as speaker after speaker emphasized the spiritual phase of his or her subject, no matter what problem he was dealing with.

The Governor General graciously gave of his time to speak at the opening session. He was preparing to leave Congo and must have been overwhelmed by many calls and inroads on the brief time remaining to him in the land for which he has done so much. His face was lined by the cares he has borne during the war years. His voice was full of emotion as he brought us his final message which was a simple one. He told us that our task is of the highest importance, that the Government has a noble task, but that the work of the Missions is yet more noble. Both his presence and his message were appreciated.

The American Consul, speaking for the large group of consuls present, gave an address full of good sense. He made several points that we should take to heart. He pointed out that in a real sense, each missionary is a representative of his country, because most of those who do not know his country will judge it by what they see

and hear in him. He emphasized that only men and women who are educationally prepared for mission work should be sent out by the Boards, and that coming to a French speaking colony, every missionary should be proficient in French.

As the conference developed, it was plain that the problems of all of us were closely related. Where the Church is strongest and well able to meet the changing situation, one finds a regenerate church membership, loving God more than and their neighbors as much as themselves. Where one finds church members going off into subversive movements, lending willing ears to the seductive call of the old heathen life, abandoning their land inheritance for the lure of large salaries in the cities, there one also finds a membership that knew the right answers but had never had that vital experience of God which made them born again Christians. Our basic task is the same as that given to the disciples by Jesus as He said "Go ye into all the world—".

The discussions on deepening and strengthening the Christian life were sound and all of us will find much that is worth while in the findings of the conference. The discussions on education were also sound, but it did seem to me that our African friends were inclined to make a shibboleth of the word "University". Following the session at which the recommendations on education were adopted. I was talking with Remy Malutama who was present with the E.P.I. choir. (The music of this choir enriched the devotional services and was greatly appreciated.) He summed it all up in a typical African way by saying "God gave us feet to walk with, not wings to fly with". If we have enough Remys among us, we shall also have enough Christian homes, Christian schools, and Christian churches.

The rapidly changing conditions in Central Africa leave many with the old foundations swept away, but no new ones laid. The people need our help. This condition was recognized and as best we could, we outlined our program of mutual helpfulness for the immediate future. It means the end of the old paternal system and the development of a

new brotherhood. Children grow up and certain periods of this growth are more difficult than others. Perhaps we are in a sort of teen age period with our African friends. They are beginning to be grown up and able to carry the responsibilities of an adult. We must not deny them this right, but we need to exercise care that we do not push them out beyond their depth. This is a period of "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

If I can summarize the achievements of the conference, it is that it was a successful venture in full fellowship. Properly nourished, this fellowship will flower into strong and vital Christian churches led by Africans trained in our own mission institutions. Increasingly the part of missionaries from outside Congo will be advisory and consultative rather than that of direct leadership. A word of warning is needed to prevent our African friends from mistaking a hunger for our education as a hunger for our Christ.

The conference was held in the dry season and there was much actual dust in the streets and over the camp which had to be settled by the great tank truck of the city that came around to sprinkle the roads. The air was renewed and we felt refreshed each time it had passed. So, in the conference, we felt that the Spirit of God descending upon us renewed our life and enabled us to "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us" and we believe that this same Spirit will help us in the days ahead to "run with patience the race that is set before us."

Our souls live by giving and receiving; we have need of another soul, whatever it gives us we make our own, and give back again in overflowing measure. This is as vitally necessary for our inner life as breathing is for our corporeal existence; without that wonderful process we perish, the heart suffers from lack of air and ceases to beat.

— from Gems from Balzac.

A WEEK OF CELEBRATING AT KIMPESE

BATOMENE ALPHONSE, Class of 1947

The second week in February was one of celebrating because almost every day there was something special and different. All the festivities were much enjoyed by the teachers, students, workmen and even the small children. I want to tell you about the two most important things that happened that week.

First of all there was the arrival of our former "mother", Dr. Mabie, who worked hard for so many years here at Kimpese teaching and helping the students. Her coming was well planned for. On Monday at 10 o'clock students, workmen, children — all of us—left our class and work and scattered to our houses to change our clothes and get ready to go to the railroad station to meet Dr. Mabie. We all got down there in good time and waited for the train, all happy. The station was crowded, everyone was talking. When we heard the train coming we got in three long lines. As soon as she got off the train our head student greeted her in the name of all of us. Then Tata Morrish with joy from the depths of his heart said "Vive!" three times and we all answered "Vive!" too.

The next morning we had a welcome meeting in the church. We told her how happy we were to have her with us and she told us how she felt about Kimpese. Every day that she spent here was a day of rejoicing for us all. On several occasions during her stay she even came into different classes and taught them.

Then we had another really big celebration. We had heard the week before about Tata Vingadio being summoned to Thysville by the State and we were very much surprised and troubled because we didn't know what it was all about. But when he came back he brought us only good news, about how he had been called to be decorated with a medal for faithful service, almost thirty years in the work of the mission

here at Kimpese. And so right away after our celebrating Mama Doctor's arrival we celebrated this event.

Thursday morning we were told that no one would work in the afternoon, as we usually do, but that when we finished classes at noon we should get ready to go to the church when we heard the bell ring. We all gathered with love and joy in our hearts. Tata Morrish opened the service by reading from the first Psalm and giving a little teaching; then he prayed. After that we all sang a song of praise. Next Tata Morrish showed us Tata Vingadio's medal and told him how happy we all were that the State should recognize his faithfulness. He also praised Tata Vingadio for all his help to the many students who have known him here at Kimpese. He told us about the words on the medal: "*Loyauté et Dévouement*" (Loyalty and Devotion.)

Then Tata Kiundu told us how Tata Vingadio had always been loving and patient in all his work. He said: "A man will wear clothes to keep warm when it is cold but will take them off when the sun gets too hot." He told us that we should be patient and faithful until we, too, deserved such recognition as the medal indicated. Then he congratulated Tata Vingadio in the name of all those who have worked for years at Kimpese.

Our head student spoke next, conveying the joy of all the students. He told of how new students come here full of fear, especially those coming from up river, because everything is so new; but that their fear soon is gone because of the love shown by Tata Vingadio to them whom he has never met before. Then we sang "Jesus shall reign where ere the sun".

After that Mama Doctor Mabie, who was the one who had really brought up Tata Vingadio, stood up and told us about his boyhood. She said that his father had been a trader in rubber and often went clear down to the coast to trade his rubber for salt. Then one time his mother was taken sick while his father was away and the witch doctors tried to heal her but they couldn't, so they

made her move outside the village. Tata Vingadio was the only one who was with her there. Then she told about him starting school. At first his uncle didn't want him to go but finally gave his permission. He entered the school at Banza Manteke along with some other boys. They were all given a hoe to work in their gardens, but they refused them and threw them down (hoeing was women's work). Some of the boys ran back home to their villages, but Tata Vingadio and others stayed on. He learned a lot in school and one day a railroad station master told him he ought to leave the work of the mission, but he refused. Once he was attacked by a crocodile and almost died as a result.

Right there we saw a storm coming up so we just sang "Vers l'Avenir" (Belgian national hymn) and went to our houses in a hurry. The next morning at our regular chapel time Mama Doctor went on with her talk, but first of all Tata Hall led us in singing "God bless our land". Then she told many more things about Tata Vingadio and congratulated him. After that we sang "Vers l'Avenir", and Tata Morrish congratulated him.

Now, to close, Tata Vingadio himself spoke and told us about his being here from the earliest days of the school. Then he said: "I entered school and graduated, I came here to school and graduated, I've worked many years and received this medal, but I haven't yet finished my course. If I continue and finally receive my reward in that last test up there (pointing to heaven) then I will be happy". He chose the song "When the Roll is called up yonder" and before leading us all in singing it read the words, putting at the end of the first verse his own name, at the end of the second his wife's name and at the end of the third all of us. We sang it with happiness, but when we got to the last verse tears came to my eyes. Tata Morrish closed with prayer.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Revelation 3:5.

Translated by Margaret Hall

EVANGELISM AT CAMP LEOPOLD

MUBIALA W. TIMOTHY

In my boyhood I used to hear the people of my village saying, "No soldier will ever become a Christian." I do not know whether in their experience some soldier gave them cause to generalize in this way, but I have discovered that soldiers may become consecrated Christians like any other people.

In the month of May, 1946, I began to accompany Mr. H. D. Brown on his semi-weekly visits to the military camp at Leopoldville, and it greatly rejoices my heart to be able to observe the hunger in the hearts of the soldiers to believe on Jesus and follow Him. Every week there are those who request that their names be recorded as inquirers who wish to learn about the way of Life, and others are eager to have their home churches send them letters of transfer for admission to the local church here. Last year the attendance at meetings was from sixty to seventy men and twelve to eighteen women, this year it is on an average of eighty men and twenty-five women.

Another cause of rejoicing is the persistence of the inquirers. At the last baptism many were told to wait because their testimony was not clear and their giving did not evidence a fervent love for the Lord, and these have not backslidden but have given themselves earnestly to preparing themselves for baptism.

Not only are meetings well attended, but the men themselves work to make their meetings bright and helpful, and there is nearly always a soloist or a quartette who have special music prepared. These soldiers learn to work with courage and vigor in the army, and there are many who set us an example in their courage and testimony for Jesus. May the Lord bless this work and give these people power to witness for Jesus Christ wherever they may be sent.

STATION NEWS

BANZA MANTEKE

As I sit down to put the news of Banza Manteke into print, I find that we have all been so busy that we have had little time to think of making the headlines. I am reminded of that old saying: "Little drops of water, little grains of sand, make the mighty ocean and the wondrous land" It seems that many little things have been done in the past few weeks that go to make up the wondrous whole of our work here, but it is difficult to isolate individual grains of sand.

We have just had the privilege of having Dr. Catherine Mabie, who spent many years here in Congo, back with us for a couple of weeks, while she is doing some translation work. Since old Banza Manteke was her field of service for 13 years before she went to Kimpese, we were glad she could be back with us for even that short time. Her stay was a help and inspiration to us all.

Our field secretary, Mr. Armstrong, spent a week-end with us recently, to discuss station affairs. He came down at the same time that Dr. Tuttle was here from Sona Bata for one of his periodic visits. Although we are told that Dr. Tuttle had a "light schedule", he spent all day Saturday operating. For my part, I would call that a day's work!

During the school recess, Miss Benner, from Leopoldville, visited us. During part of her stay, she accompanied the Misses Ehnbom and Ford on a trip of several days to Mukimbungu and Lukunga.

Mr. Engwall recently took a two weeks' itinerary along the railroad and up onto the Bangu. Being in an area that has been at a very low ebb spiritually, but in which a new pastor has been recently selectd, there is much spiritual rebuilding to be done. After the first week, Mr. Engwall was joined by Mr. Abbott, and they completed the trip on the Bangu

together. Some villages were visited where only one or two people remain in the church. However, there were several people who asked forgiveness and expressed desire to return to the church. As long as a spark still burns, it can be quickened into a flame if it has the right impulse behind it.

In January, Mr. and Mrs. Abbott, and the children spent almost two weeks at old Banza Manteke, where the old residence is getting its face lifted. The old house was in such a sad state that it was beginning to walk off piece by piece. Therefore the kitchen unit has been removed, the main part is being cut down in size, to make a smaller, more practical house for use of the missionaries when itinerating in the area.To have a smaller but livable house on the old station will enable a family to spend periods of time there in an attempt to quicken the spiritual life of the area which is at present at low tide.

The past month has seen a significant step taken by the Sona Mpangu church here on the Station. It has seen construction started on a new monitor's house, being built entirely by the church. When the need arose for a new house, and we had no money in sight for it, they decided to undertake the project, and as a result the house is under construction.

Mrs. Engwall is busy with cooking classes for both boys and girls. Miss Ford is hard at work in the station boarding school. Miss Ehnbom is busy with construction of new brick houses at the Leper Colony. Mrs. Abbott is conducting a Sunday School for the children. All in all, each one of the Banza Manteke family is doing his or her part to keep the work going and to glorify the precious name of Jesus Christ in this small part of Congo. — E. R. ABBOTT

KIKONGO

If you came to Kikongo now you would see some welcome changes. The house deserted by the Armstrongs, is now busy with the settling in of the Atkins who were motored here by the Armstrongs about a month before Christmas. The house I lived in is now whitewashed and filled with the happy presence of Agnes Anderson who arrived a week ago, passing on the way from Banningville, Dr. Osterholm who had just made his enlivening

visit here, leaving in his train many beds of operatees. You would see me in the temporary thatched cottage down towards the river, happily ensconsed with my friendly beasts and household goods.

The Robbins' house is being erected and Ernest Atkins is fixing his machine shop preparatory to permanent building. His coming leaves Viola Smith free to do more women's work and take some evangelistic trips with Smithy. When the Robbins and Ruth Dickey arrive, we should really be able to do something like what we ought to, to help these people.

Everything is beautifully flourishing, and we have not had anything more than our usual excitement lately. Yesterday a madman tried to shoot the wife of one of the catechists at her peanut field, with a bow and arrow. Promptly of course there was quite an exodus of many interested parties. We are cheered by Saturday night parties of virtuous children and volley ball and deck tennis as an antidote to our frequent admonitions. On Thursdays there is the women's society which creeps along with much prodding as it is very new. The girls are doing pretty well with their Wednesday night prayer meeting with the program made by them (with little supervision) and the meetings with talk, prayers, Bible verses and special music all carried on by them. Of course when a girl paws through the hymn book looking for the Bible reading, the solemnity of the meeting is a bit hard to maintain but on the whole the contact with God is felt. In the school we have been laying special emphasis on honesty in many of its aspects with some apparent effect, although the day after my major speech I lost a pumpkin out of my vegetable garden.

Before Christmas the Smiths and the Armstrongs went to Dinga for a meeting of thanksgiving for the mercies of God, of giving themselves in baptism and of reconsecration and plans for the future. One could see the great need of a resident missionary there, as fetichism is very strong, and many of the workers are weak, because the place is so far away

from Kikongo. Our own meetings at Kikongo with village teachers, were happy events, with 46 baptisms and I hope many uplifted hearts.

This Friday night it is very quiet as it has been raining and it seems cold to the people although only about 70° and they have gone to bed to get warm. I hear the sound of crickets, and the Atkins' electric light motor, the barking of Nellie, the Smith's poodle, and the heavy breathing of my Lotty at my feet. It is these lovely cool quiet nights which give us the energy to be calm and wise (we hope) the next day. At least there is never any doubt that all that we have is needed here and we would not wish to be any where else.

— GERTRUDE ANDERSON

LEOPOLDVILLE

The coming of a new Belgian Army Chaplain will mean that we shall be relieved of the responsibility at the military camp. Harry Brown has been caring for this and has been very happy over the response there. Each week inquirers are being examined for baptism and many have given evidence of a true inward change. The new chaplain will have a good group of Christian men and women to start with.

We are to have a baptistry in our chapel at Belge, the native city. The plans were drawn by Ernest Atkins, materials furnished by George Carpenter at a very reasonable price, the cost is underwritten by the station staff, and the work done by regular station personnel except for the plumbing. We trust that the baptistry will be in use often.

The first election of deacons by ballot was held at Belge the first Sunday in March. We believe that this gives those elected a greater sense of duty and certainly it means that it is the church, not a small inner group, who do the choosing. Four men and two women were elected.

Living in Leo gives the opportunity of meeting a lot of folk. During the C.P.C. meeting we renewed acquaintance with many old friends and made a few new ones. Elmer Hall and Dr. Tuttle, as part of the family, were welcomed by the Leo staff. We were also glad to see the Gittings but not happy that Mrs. Gittings had to go home for an operation. — B.W.A.

IN MEMORIAM

MRS. P. C. METZGER

Kathryn Arlin Metzger who served 34 years in Congo, passed on to her heavenly Home on February 15, 1947. For about six years she and Mr. Metzger were living at Olds Hall, Daytona Beach, Florida. Her health had not been good, but she slipped away very quietly with no serious illness. A funeral service was held at the First Baptist Church Daytona Beach, after which Mr. Metzger left with the body for Chicago where services were held at the Second Baptist Church. The burial was at Memorial Park Evanston, Ill.

Mrs. Metzger was born January 23, 1875, and was baptized in Second Baptist Church, Chicago in May 1892. She had special training in music at Valparaiso Normal School and then went to the Baptist Missionary Training School in Chicago. In May 1905 she was married to Mr. Paul C. Metzger and in June of that year sailed for Congo. The first term, except for 9 months was spent at Ikoko with Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clark. The following terms were spent at Tshumbiri until January 1931 at which time they went to Tondo and stayed for two terms leaving finally for home in May 1939.

To the Congo people Mrs. Metzger was known as Mama Molingo or Mama Lolango, meaning "love". It was truly in love that she labored here for the Congo people. She taught in the schools and carried on medical work many years at Tshumbiri with no previous medical training. It was our privilege to be at Tondo during the 8 years that Mr. and Mrs. Metzger were there. She gave herself unreservedly to the teaching

and training of the Congo people; so much so that her health broke down before she had been in Congo long after that last furlough. She never ceased to give first place to the Congo people, for what time she could spend was given to them.

It was a great joy to Mr. and Mrs. Metzger when their only son, Roland G. Metzger, gave himself for missionary work and was able to come to Congo. He is now one of our missionaries and the first, second-generation missionary in our Congo Mission. He and his wife are now on furlough and were able to go to Florida for two short visits to see their parents.

We regret to see these older missionaries going, but their fruits live on here among the people for whom they gave their lives and we are cheered when we see men and women devoted to their Lord, who have come to know Him because of what these servants of Christ have been and done. Our prayers go with those loved ones who are left and who feel the burden of sorrow. May God give them grace and strength.

ETHEL D. BROWN

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is necessary to raise the price of the Congo News Letter because of the rise in cost of materials. Please refer to the inside front cover for details of subscription rates.

Hallelujah!
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory.

The Lord shall reign forever and ever.
King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
Hallelujah!

CONGO MISSION DIRECTORY

Listed in order of arrival on field or at station — present term.

BANZA MANTEKE

Miss Esther Ehnbom R.N.
Rev. and Mrs. M. S. Engwall
Miss Annis Ford
Rev. and Mrs. E. R. Abbott

KIKONGO

Miss Gertrude Anderson
Rev. and Mrs. C. E. Smith
Rev. and Mrs. E. Atkins
Miss Agnes Anderson R.N.

KIMPESE

Rev. and Mrs. E. G. Hall
Rev. and Mrs. H. Erickson

LEOPOLDVILLE

Rev. Phyllis Benner
Rev. and Mrs. H. D. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Armstrong

MOANZA

Miss Alice Jorgenson R.N.
Miss Eva Shepard
Rev. and Mrs. T. E. Bubeck

SONA BATA

Miss Muriel Jennings (B.M.S.)
Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Tuttle
Miss Vendla Anderson
Rev. L. Gittings
Miss Sylvia Varley (B.M.S.)

VANGA

Miss Dorothy Wiseman R.N.
Dr. A. C. Osterholm
Miss Doris Wiseman
Rev. and Mrs. C. Jump

ON FURLOUGH OR EN ROUTE

Mrs. A. C. Osterholm
Dr. and Mrs. H. M. Freas
Rev. Ruth Dickey
Miss Emily Satterberg R.N.
Miss Grace Cooper
Rev. and Mrs. W.F. Robbins
Rev. and Mrs. L. A. Brown
Miss Marguerite Eldredge
Mr. and Mrs .H. J. Watkins
Miss Mary Bonar
Rev. and Mrs. R. Metzger
Mrs. L. Gittings

STUDYING IN BELGIUM

Miss Helen Gaskill
Rev. and Mrs. Edwin Boone
Miss Vera Murdock, R.N.
Dr. Jean Austin